

## Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-07 ISO-00 A-01 H-01 NSC-06 /023 W

----- 088834

R 040658Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8105

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 5582

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS NEA/RA

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: OREP( OBEY, DAVE D-WISC)

SUBJECT: CODEL OBEY VISIT

1. SUMMARY: CONGRESSMEN DAVE OBEY (D, WISC), EDWARD KOCH(D, NEW YORK) AND JOSEPH EARLY (D, MASS) VISITED ISRAEL AUG 27-29. CONGRESSMEN MET PRIME MINISTER RABIN, DEFENSE MINISTER PERS, CHAIRMAN OF KNESSET FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE YITZHAK NAVON, AND DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF FINANCE ARNON GAFNI. THEY OBSERVED ISRAELI CHECKPOINT PROCEDURES AT ALLENBY BRIDGE, MADE BRIEF VISIT TO KALANDIA REFUGEE CAMP, VISITED GOLAN HEIGHTS, AND TOURED JERUSALEM. CONGRESSMEN RECEIVED BRIEFING FROM ECON COUNSELOR ON ARRIVAL. PLANNED DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR HAD TO BE CANCELLED DUE TO NEGOTIATIONS. CONGRESSMEN REQUESTED TO MEET SECRETARY, BUT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO ARRANGE MUTUALLY CONVENIENT SCHEDULE. CONGRESSMEN DECLINED TO MEET UNDERSEC SISCO. CABLE IS UNCLEARED AND SUBJECT TO AMENDMENT BY CODEL. END SUMMARY.

2. AFTER CROSSING ALLENBY BRIDGE, CONGRESSMEN REQUESTED INSPECTION OF ISRAELI CUSTOMS AND SECURITY FACILITIES AT SITE, EXPLAINING THAT JORDANIANS HAD TOLD OF ARAB VISITORS BEING SUBJECTED TO INDIGNITIES BY ISRAELIS. OFFICER IN CHARGE CONFIDENTIAL

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INITIALLY REFUSED REQUEST, SAYING IT WAS WITHOUT PRECEDENT AND EMPHASIZING SENSITIVITY OF SECURITY PROCEDURES. CONGRESSMEN PERSISTED AND EVENTUALLY WERE GRANTED IMPROMPTU TOUR OF COMPLETE FACILITIES INCLUDING CHECK-IN, BAGGAGE, CHECK,

AND DOUBLE SECURITY CHECK. CONGRESSMEN WERE APPROACHED BY OLD WOMAN IN TEARS BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT BRING IN DOLL; ISRAELIS EXPLAINED THAT DOLLS FORBIDDEN BECAUSE IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO BREAK THEM TO EXAMINE FOR HIDDEN DETONATORS. CONGRESSMEN ALSO APPROACHED BY STUDENT RETURNING TO OCCUPIED TERRITORIES; HE COMPLAINED THAT 95 PERCENT CUSTOMS DUTIES ON BOOKS WAS TOO MUCH. CONGRESSMEN WERE TAKEN THROUGHSEXUALLY-SEGREGATED SECURITY UNITS WHERE EACH ARAB ROUTINELY STRIPS TO UNDERWEAR BEFORE ELECTRONIC CHECK FOR WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES. OVERALL IMPRESSION OF CONGRESSMEN WAS THAT ISRAELI PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES WERE NOT EXCESSIVE IN VIEW OF SECURITY CONCERNS.

3. LUNCH WITH ARNON GAFNI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF FINANCE: GAFNI GAVE OVERALL PICTURE OF ISRAELI ECONOMY, STRESSING BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS DEFICIT WHICH HAD QUADRUPLLED SINCE OCTOBER WAR DUE TO INCREASED DEFENSE EXPENDITURES, INCREASED OIL COSTS, AND INFLATION. AFTER DETAILED DISCUSSION OF CURRENT AID REQUEST, CONGRESSMEN ASKED ABOUT FUTURE REQUESTS, BOTH DURATION AND LEVELS. GAFNI WAS HESITANT IN ANSWERING, BUT DID CITE RECENT STUDY SHOWING THAT IN 6-7 YEARS GOI SHOULD BE ABLE TO FINANCE DEFICIT WITHOUT SPECIAL AID PROVIDE(A) DEFENSE EXPENDITURES WEREFROZEN;(B) EXPORTS INCREASE 17 PERCENT ANNUALLY; AND (C) IMPORTS INCREASE ONLY 6 PERCENT ANNUALLY. CONGRESSMEN CONCLUDED WITH EXPRESSION OF CONCERN ABOUT MAGNITUDE OF AID REQUESTS AND THEIR VIRTUALLY OPEN-ENDED NATURE. THEY ALSO CRITICIZED ISRAELIS FOR NOT SUPPLYING SUFFICIENT DOCUMENTARY SUPPORT FOR LAST YEAR'S \$324 MILLION SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE REQUEST.

4. MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER RABIN; CONGRESSMEN MET WITH RABIN IN HIS OFFICE FOR AN HOUR AND THREE-QUARTERS. RABIN SAID THAT ISRAELWANTS PEACE; HE REJECTED IDEA THAT ISRAEL IS INTRANSIGENT. HE SAID THAT FROM 1949 TO 1967 ISRAEL HAD NOT TAKEN ONEINCH OF ARAB LAND, BUT THERE HAD NOT BEEN PEACE. HE SAID THAT ISRAEL HAD WITHDRAWN THREE TIMESFROM SINAI WITHOUT PEACE, AND THAT HISTORY AFFORDS NO OTHER SUCH EXAMPLE. CONFIDENTIAL

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HE SAID THAT EGYPT'S FORMULA FOR PEACE, VIZ. RETURN TO '67 BORDERSAND RECOGNITION OF PALESTININIAN RIGHTS, COULD NOT BE RELIED UPON. HE QUOTED SADAT AS SAYING THAT PEACE COULD COME ONLY INNEXT GENERATION, AND SAID AGAIN THAT ISRAEL WOULD NEVER NEGOTIATE WITH PLO, WHICH WAS A TERRORIST ORGAINIZTION THAT REFUSED TO RECONGINZE THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL. IN EXCHANGE FOR WORDS OF PEACE, RABIN SAID, SADAT WANTS BACK ALL HIS TERRITORIES AND THE CREATION OF AN ARAFAT STATE. RABIN SAID THAT NEVERTHELESS HIS GOVERNMENT IS NOT SIMPLY SITTING AND WAITING, BUT IS TAKING RISKS FOR PEACE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI INTERIMAGREEMENT WOULDINITIATE CHANGE OF ATTITUDE IN ARAB COUNTRIES AND WOULD BE STEP TOWARDS REAL PEACE.

5. CONGRESSMEN TOLD RABIN THAT THERE WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE LENGTHLY DEBATE IN CONGRESS OVER QUESTION OF U.S. TECHNICIANS IN SINAI PASSES. THEY SAID SADAT HAD STATED HE HAD NO INTEREST IN SUCH AMERICAN PRESENCE, THAT IT WAS ISRAELI IDEA. RABIN DENIED THAT ISRAEL HAD PROPOSED AMERICAN PRESENCE. WHEN ASKED WHOSE IDEA IT WAS ORIGINALLY, RABIN SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW. CONGRESSMEN MENTIONED NEGATIVE PUBLIC FEELING IN U.S. THAT "UNCLE SAM IS BEING ASKED TO BUY PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST." RABIN RESPONDED THAT QUESTION IS WHETHER U.S. IS WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE TO PEACE, NOT TO WAR. LIFTING UP A STACK OF LETTERS FROM HIS DESK, HE SAID THAT ISRAELI PUBLIC BELIEVES INTERIM AGREEMENT IS BEING CONCLUDED BECAUSE IT IS IN U.S. INTEREST, NOT BECAUSE IT IS IN ISRAEL'S INTEREST. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ABOUT ADDITIONAL INTERIM AGREEMENTS, RABIN SAID THAT STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH IS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR FURTHER MOVES BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL, AND THAT NEGOTIATIONS ON GOLAN HEIGHTS COULD TAKE PLACE ONLY IN CONTEXT OF OVERALL AGREEMENT. AS FOR WEST BANK, HE SAID THAT SINCERABAT THERE WAS NO ONE WITH WHOM TO NEGOTIATE CONGRESSMEN RELATED REMARK SADAT MADE TO THEM THAT ADDITIONAL MOVES MUST FOLLOW INTERIM AGREEMENT. THEY QUOTED SADAT AS SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT AFFORD TO WAIT SIX OR NINE MONTHS, THAT HE COULD NOT AFFORD TO GET THAT FAR AHEAD OF REST OF ARAB WORLD. RABIN REPLIED "SADAT IS THE HEAD OF A SOVEREIGN STATE. LET HIM NEGOTIATE IF HE WANTS TO." SUMMING UP HIS VIEWS ON PERIOD FOLLOWING INTERIM AGREEMENT, RABIN FORESAW LONG NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ARABS. HE WANTED NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT PRESSURE AND WITHOUT REASSESSMENT. HE PREDICTED LONG PROCESS WITH MANY RISKS AND SOME HOPE.

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-07 ISO-00 A-01 H-01 NSC-06 /023 W  
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R 040658Z SEP 75  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8106  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 5582

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS NEA/RA

6. CONGRESSMEN MENTIONED THEIR TALKS WITH HUSSEIN AND RIFAI IN JORDAN. REFERRING TO AMERICAN'S BALANCED POLICY IN MIDDLE EAST, CONGRESSMEN CONTRASTED MAGNITUDE OF ISRAEL'S DEFENSE REQUEST WITH JORDAN'S MUCH SMALLER REQUEST FOR HAWK MISSILE SYSTEM AND QUOTED HUSSEIN AS SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT MAINTAIN CREDIBILITY UNLESS FULL REQUEST WERE APPROVED. RABIN FIRST COMPARED ISRAEL'S ARMS AGAINST COMBINED ARAB ARMS, WHICH SHOWED THAT ISRAEL WAS GREATLY OUTNUMBERED; HE THEN SAID THAT JORDAN HAD NOTHING TO FEAR FROM ISRAEL. IF JORDAN WANTS HAWK MISSILES, IT CAN ONLY BE BECAUSE JORDAN WISHES TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE WAR AGAINST ISRAEL. ISRAEL HAS NOTHING AGAINST HUSSEIN, IT WAS ISRAEL WHO SAVED HUSSEIN FROM SYRIA IN 1970 AT THE REQUEST OF THE U.S.

7. DINNER HOSTED BY YITZHAK NAVON, CHAIRMAN OF KNESSET COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS AND SECURITY: CONGRESSMEN RAISED MANY OF SAME QUESTIONS DISCUSSED WITH PRIME MINISTER. NAVON ECHOED RABIN'S HOPE THAT INTERIM AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT WOULD CHANGE ATTITUDES IN ARAB COUNTRIES. HE EXPLAINED PROPOSAL FOR AMERICAN PRESENCE IN SINAI PASSES AS POLITICAL SUBSTITUTE FOR ISRAEL'S PREVIOUS DEMAND FOR EGYPTIAN DECLARATION OF NON-BELLIGERENCY IN FACE OF PRESSURES TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL OF SINAI PASSES. ON WEST BANK QUESTION, CONGRESSMEN RELATED JORDANIAN PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT TO THEM THAT JORDAN WOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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SIGN PEACE TREATY IF ISRAEL WOULD MAKE PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO RETURN TO PRE-67 BORDERS AT WHATEVER FUTURE TIME ISRAEL IS SATISFIED JORDAN IS NO LONGER HOSTILE. AFTER PERSISTENT QUESTIONING FROM CONGRESSMEN, NAVON SAID THAT MOST ISRAELIS WOULD BE WILLING TO RETURN WEST BANK FOR TRUE PEACE.

8. DINNER HOSTED BY MINISTER OF DEFENSE PERES, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY CHIEF OF STAFF GUR, ISRAEL AIR FORCE CHIEF PELED, ET AL: GENERAL GUR STARTED BY OUTLINING RELATIVE STRENGTH OF ARAB AND ISRAELI FORCES. PERES DISCOUNTED JORDANIAN NEED FOR 14 HAWK MISSILE SITES, SAYING THAT APART FROM FEW CITIES AND AIR BASES THERE WAS LITTLE IN JORDAN REQUIRING MISSILE DEFENSES. HE SAID THAT IF HAWK REQUEST WERE GRANTED, JORDAN WOULD BE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN ANOTHER WAR; ISRAEL ALREADY " POSSESSED JORDAN'S WAR PLAN," WHICH WAS WELL MADE AND WOULD CAUSE ISRAEL PROBLEMS IT WOULD RATHER AVOID. ASKED ABOUT WEST BANK, PERES SAID ISRAEL IS OPPOSED TO ESTABLISHMENT OF PALESTINIAN EXTREMIST STATE WHICH WOULD BE ISLAND OF DANGER. HE SAID PROBLEM COULD BEST BE SOLVED BY FEDERATION BETWEEN ISRAEL, JORDAN, AND TERRITORIES. HE SAID RHETORICALLY " U.S. IS A FEDERATION, EEC IS A FEDERATION, WHY SHOULDN'T WE FORM A FEDERATION?" IN REGARD TO ISRAEL'S DEFENSE COSTS AND REQUESTS FOR U.S. AID, PERES SAID INCREASES WERE LARGELY RESULT OF INFLATION AND WERE CALCULATED TENTATIVELY USING PENTAGON'S OWN ESTIMATED 23 PERCENT INFLATION FIGURE. IN REPLY TO QUESTION FROM CONGRESSMEN ABOUT FUTURE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS, PERES SAID ISRAEL WOULD ASK

FOR SIMILAR AMOUNT ADJUSTED FOR INFLATION FOR EACH OF NEXT FOUR YEARS. HE STATED THAT ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR 1976 DEFENSE ASSISTANCE TOTALS \$2.2 BILLION.

9. CONGRESSMEN ALSO VISITED GOLAN HEIGHTS, MADE BRIEF STOP AT KALANDIA REFUGEE CAMP, AND TOURED JERUSALEM AND BETHLEHEM. CONGRESSMEN EXPRESSED VIEW THAT VISIT HAD BEEN PRODUCTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL.  
TOON

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 04 SEP 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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